

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicant acknowledges, with thanks, the receipt of the office action dated December 13, 2007, and completion of the personal interview of January 18, 2008. The Examiner's observations and suggestions are much appreciated and summarized herein. Claims 1-28 are currently pending.

Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S Patent Publication No. 2004/0030809 to Lozano et al. (*hereinafter*, "Lozano") in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0128386 to Kim (*hereinafter*, "Kim"). In view of the amendments and arguments set forth below, it is submitted that all pending claims are patentably distinct over the art of record.

The subject application teaches a system and method in which a computer network is searched for at least one network accessible printer, which network printer is accessible by the client machine via a direct, dedicated connection between the printer and an associated server and at least one network accessible printer is selected from such search. Identifier data associated with each selected network accessible printer is retrieved as well as a network address corresponding to the at least one selected network accessible printer. The network address corresponding identifier data, and a network path corresponding to the at least one selected network accessible printer is stored in an internal value table of the client machine. A port from the at least one selected network accessible printer is mapped to a port on a printer driver on the client machine in accordance with the value table, wherein the printer driver of the client machine is able to pass through an actual port associated therewith for bidirectional data communication with the at least one selected network accessible printer via the direct, dedicated connection.

The subject application solves a problem particularly associated with a sharing of a printer that is attached directly to another computer, such as a workstation. By way of example, a workstation may have a printer or other device locally attached. Such a local connection may be via USB, parallel port, serial port, Bluetooth, infrared, or the like. With such a connection, the workstation sees the device as a local port. Applications can access this port directly, and transfer data directly to the port, or read data from the port. Communication to or from the port is a direct route for communicating with the device. Many networks allow for sharing of locally connected devices. When shared, users will see the device as a computer, not as a port. When shared in this fashion, full access to reading or writing data via the port is sacrificed.

The Examiner relies on the teachings of Lozano, supplemented by those of Kim, in connection with the pending rejection. The Examiner notes that Lozano is deficient in teaching a mapping of a port on a printer driver to a client machine, and relies on Kim to address this shortcoming. Kim is directed to a system for switching a driver to communicate between a basic port and a physically interlinked port in

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connection with a device connected to a computer. In the event that the basic port does not connect with the peripheral device, then an alternative connection via a physically interlinked port is made.

Unlike Kim, the subject application teaches a system wherein a printer, local to a first networked computer, is shared via a network. Information about the physical printing device connected to the first networked computer is stored in a client machine. This information allows the client machine to communicate via its own printer driver directly to a port defined by the stored information. Since the client machine now sees the shared device as a port, rather than a device, full options for data communication noted above are realized.

Amendment to each of the claims has been made to render more clearly distinctions over the art of record. The amendments clarify that the system includes two, network interconnected, computers, one of which is sharing a locally connected printer. Information is stored in the client machine which allows its printer driver to see a port, rather than a device. It is submitted that this is removed from the teachings of the art of record.

In accordance with the afore-noted amendments and comments, it is submitted that all claims are patentably distinct over the art, and in condition for allowance thereover. An early allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any fees necessitated by the foregoing communication, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0902, referencing our Docket No. 66329/31252.

Date: 1-31-08

Respectfully submitted,



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